United States Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

BIOENERGY, CLIMATE, AND ENVIRONMENT

FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

YOUTH, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

USDA NIFA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area

- Agricultural Research Service
- Economic Research Service
- National Agricultural Statistics Service
- National Institute of Food & Agriculture

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Agricultural Research Service

The bold lines reflect the boundaries of the ARS geographic Areas.

NAL

USDA & ARS HQ
Washington, DC

Alaska   Hawaii   Puerto Rico

- Includes National Agricultural Library

Economic Research Service

- Analyze characteristics & financial performance

- Assess participation in Federal farm programs and impact on distribution of program assistance

- Examine trends in exit and entry

- Research factors affecting farm transitions

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Economic Research Service

- Beginning & Disadvantaged Farmers topic
- http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/beginning-disadvantaged-farmers.aspx
- Amber Waves
  - BFRs and the 2014 Farm Act (June 2014)
  - Younger Beginning Farmers Tend to Operate Larger Farms (April 2013)
- Beginning Farmers and Ranchers at a Glance: 2013 Edition

nass.usda.gov

nifa.usda.gov

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

- Competitive grants to collaborations of organizations that provide education, training, mentoring, and technical assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers (~first 10 years & aspiring farmers/ranchers)

- 145 projects funded in 2009-2012, about half still underway

  - Standard Grants: local and regional training, education, technical assistance

  - Educational Enhancement: evaluation, curriculum development, assistance

  - Clearinghouse: information for BFRs, curriculum sharing,

- Agriculture Act of 2014 provides $20 million/year for 2014-2018

2014 Agriculture Act Changes

- Some changes to topical priorities

- Addition of school-based agricultural education organizations to partnership/collaboration priority

- New emphasis on military veteran BFRs (at least 5% of funds)

- Reduced requirement (5% instead of 25%) for projects serving limited-resource BFRs, socially disadvantaged BFRs, and farmworkers

- Indirect rate for standard grants capped at 10%

Standard Grant Topics
2014 Agriculture Act

A. Basic livestock, forest management, and crop farming practices;

B. Innovative farm, ranch, and private, nonindustrial forest land transfer strategies;

C. Entrepreneurship and business training;

D. Financial and risk management training (including the acquisition and management of agricultural credit);

E. Natural resource management and planning;

F. Curriculum development;

Standard Grant Topics – cont.

G. Mentoring, apprenticeships, and internships;

H. Resources and referral;

I.   Farm financial benchmarking;

J. Assisting beginning farmers or ranchers in acquiring land from retiring farmers and ranchers;

K. Agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training for veterans;

L. Farm safety and awareness; and

M. Other similar subject areas of use to beginning farmers or ranchers.

Outcomes & Evaluation

- Annual reports – narratives & metrics
  - Numbers participating (>50,000)
  - Percent who learn (80-85%)
  - Percent who make changes (26-57%)
  - Impacts of those changes ($, sustainability)
- Annual project directors' meetings
  - Presentations to peers, Q&As
  - Best practices shared, summarized
- Educational Enhancement Projects

Start2Farm Services and Tools

- **Start2Farm.gov**- database driven website
  - *Reference*- answers questions from farmers via email, phone, and regular mail.
  - *Subject Expertise*- Staff in Start2Farm and the Sustainable Systems and Communities Program at NAL
- **Start2Farm Together**- communication tools for educators and service providers to network and share best practices
  - *BFRDP ExtraNet*- communication hub for BFRDP grant recipients includes forums and document library
  - Webinars and Trainings
  - Monthly Newsletters and Informational Listserv
- **Reporting**- Assistance and tools for BFRDP grant reporting provided and collected through Start2Farm (fed to NIFA/REEport)

Start2Farm Content

Categories

- Education and Training
- Financing
- Technical Assistance
- Networking

Sources of content

- USDA
- Landgrants
- State Dept of Ag
- Non-profit Organizations
- Community based orgs

Database Structure

- Organization records- *706 total-* includes all organizations either running, producing, or otherwise affiliated with new farmer and rancher programs and resources
- Program records- *379 total-* includes all activities including workshops, trainings, loans, etc.
- Resources- *332 total-* includes all physical and virtual objects including databases, documents, tutorials, etc.
- Hundreds more in the queue to be added
- *Breakdown USDA 5.63% Other 94.37%*

In the past year, the website has had over 85,000 visitors who visited for an average of 4 minutes.

Stakeholder Input

- features of the program that might be improved

- elements of the Request for Applications and the application process that could be clarified or improved

- timing of the application / award cycle

- anything else

Contact Information

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"comments" by July 3, 2014 for FY2015